

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A modified system for balancing soft tissue intraoperatively during joint arthroplasty, the system being of the type having a first joint trial having an articulating surface having a curved contour, a second joint trial having an articulating surface, a flexible sensor array capable of being shaped to define a curved contour, the sensor array being capable of generating a signal in response to pressure, and a protector having a curved contoured articulating surface and being capable of transmitting pressure to the sensor array, the modified system comprising:

complementary mounting members associated with the protector and one of the trials for temporarily securing the sensor array between the protector and the trial, the complementary mounting members being positioned so that the protector and the sensor array may be temporarily secured on the curved contour of the articulating surface of the trial;

wherein the sensor array is removable from protector and trial without damaging the sensor array; and

wherein the complementary mounting members limit movement of the protector with respect to the associated trial in use so that the position of the articulating surface of the protector is fixed relative to the articulating surface of the associated trial during use.

2. (currently amended) The modified system of claim 1 wherein the protector comprises a first portion and a second portion joined along an axis, and wherein the first portion of the protector overlies at least a part of ~~is bonded to the~~ curved contour of the articulating surface of ~~one of the first trials~~ and the second portion overlies ~~is pivotable about the axis to a position overlying~~ at least a substantial part of the sensor array and at least a substantial part of the first portion.

3. (original) The modified system of claim 1 wherein the complementary mounting members comprise a stud and an aperture.
4. (currently amended) The modified system of claim 1 wherein the complementary mounting members allow the trial and protector to be snap fit together with the sensor array between the protector and the curved contour of the trial-articulating surface of the trial to temporarily combine the protector, sensor array and trial into an assembly for use.
5. (currently amended) A modified system for balancing soft tissue intraoperatively during joint arthroplasty, the system being of the type having a first joint trial having an articulating surface having a curved contour, a second joint trial having an articulating surface, a flexible sensor array ~~capable of being~~ shaped to define a curved contour, the sensor array being capable of generating a signal in response to pressure, and a protector having a curved contoured surface and being capable of transmitting pressure to the sensor array, the modified system comprising:
 - mating members associated with the protector and one of the trials for temporarily fixing the position of at least part of the protector with respect to the trial;
 - wherein the sensor array is temporarily in a fixed position between the curved contoured surface of the protector and the curved contour of the trial-articulating surface of the first trial; and
 - wherein the sensor array is free from adhesive.
6. (original) The modified system of claim 5 wherein the mating members comprise a recess and a protrusion.

7. (currently amended) The modified system of claim 5 wherein the protector comprises a first portion and a second portion joined along an axis, and wherein the first portion of the protector overlies at least a part of ~~is bonded to the~~ curved contour of the articulating surface of ~~one of the first trials~~ and the second portion overlies ~~is pivotable about the axis to a position overlying~~ at least a substantial part of the sensor array and at least a substantial part of the first portion.

8. (original) The modified system of claim 5 wherein the mating members comprise a stud and an aperture.

9. (currently amended) The modified system of claim 5 wherein the trial and protector are capable of being snap fit together with the sensor array between the protector and the curved contour of the ~~trial~~-articulating surface of the first trial to temporarily combine the protector, sensor array and first trial into an assembly for use.

10. (currently amended) A modified system for balancing soft tissue intraoperatively during joint arthroplasty, the system being of the type having a first joint trial having an articulating surface with a curved contour, a second joint trial having an articulating surface, a flexible sensor array ~~capable of being~~ shaped to define a curved contour, the sensor array being capable of generating a signal in response to pressure, and a protector having a curved contoured surface and being capable of transmitting pressure to the sensor array, the curved contoured surface of the protector overlying at least a substantial part of the curved contour of the flexible sensor array, the modified system comprising:

a stud extending between the protector and one of the trials for temporarily fixing the position of at least part of the protector with respect to the trial.

11. (currently amended) The modified system of claim 10 wherein the protector comprises a first portion and a second portion joined along an axis, and wherein the first portion of the protector overlies at least a part of ~~is bonded to the~~ curved contour of the articulating surface of one of the first trials and the second portion overlies ~~is pivotable about the axis to a position overlying~~ at least a substantial part of the sensor array and at least a substantial part of the first portion and wherein the stud extends from the second portion of the protector toward the articulating surface of the associated trial.

12. (currently amended) A modified system for balancing soft tissue intraoperatively during joint arthroplasty, the system being of the type including a first joint trial having an articulating surface having a curved contour, a second joint trial having an articulating surface, a flexible sensor array associated with one of the trials and ~~capable of~~ being shaped to define a curved contour, the sensor array being capable of generating a signal in response to pressure, and a protector having a curved contoured surface and being capable of transmitting pressure to the sensor array, the sensor array being positioned between the curved contour of the articulating surface of the first joint trial and the curved contoured surface of the protector, the modified system characterized in that:

the sensor array is positively located with respect to at least one of the protector and ~~associated the first~~ trial; and

the sensor array is separable from the associated trial and the protector both before and after use.

13. (original) The modified system of claim 12 wherein the protector and at least one of the joint trials have mating positioning members.

14. (original) The modified system of claim 13 wherein the mating positioning members comprise a recess and a protrusion.

15. (original) The modified system of claim 13 wherein the mating positioning members comprise an aperture and a stud so that the protector can be snap fit to the trial.

16. (currently amended) The modified system of claim 12 wherein the protector has a first portion and a second portion joined along an axis, wherein the first portion of the protector ~~is bonded to~~ overlies at least part of the curved contour of the articulating surface of ~~one of the first trials~~ and the second portion ~~is pivotable about the axis~~ overlies at least a substantial part of the sensor array and a substantial part of the first portion.

17. (original) The modified system of claim 12 wherein the protector is capable of being snap fit to one of the trials with the sensor array between the protector and the trial articulating surface to temporarily combine the protector, sensor array and trial into an assembly for use.

18. (withdrawn) In a system for balancing soft tissue intraoperatively during joint arthroplasty wherein the system has a first joint trial having an articulating surface, a second joint trial having an articulating surface, a flexible sensor array capable of being shaped to define a curved contour, the sensor array being capable of generating a signal in response to pressure, and a protector having a curved contoured surface and being capable of transmitting pressure to the sensor array, a method of sterilizing and assembling the system comprising: providing the sensor array and the protector as discrete elements; sterilizing the sensor array

and the protector as discrete elements; and mechanically fixing the position of at least a portion of the protector with respect to one of the trials with the sensor array in a fixed position and substantially covered by at least part of the protector after the sensor array and the protector have been sterilized.

19. (withdrawn) The method of claim 18 wherein the act of mechanically fixing the position of at least a portion of the protector to one of the trials comprises snap fitting complementary mounting members together.

20. (withdrawn) The method of claim 19 wherein the complementary mounting members comprise a stud into an aperture.

21. (withdrawn) The method of claim 18 wherein the protector and sensor array are held together as an assembly by a mechanical connection.

22. (withdrawn) The method of claim 18 wherein the protector has first and second portions joined along an axis, the method further comprising bonding the first portion of the protector to the trial before sterilizing the protector while leaving the second portion capable of pivotal movement about the axis, and wherein the act of mechanically fixing at least a portion of the protector to one of the trials comprises inserting the sensor array between the first and second portions of the protector and then securing the second portion of the protector to the trial with the second portion extending over at least a substantial part of the sensor array.

23. (withdrawn) In a system for balancing soft tissue intraoperatively during joint arthroplasty wherein the system has a first joint trial having an articulating surface, a second joint trial having an articulating surface, a flexible sensor array capable of being shaped to define a curved contour, the sensor array being capable of generating a signal in response to pressure, and a protector having a curved contoured surface and being capable of transmitting pressure to the sensor array, a method of sterilizing and assembling the system comprising: providing the sensor array and the protector as discrete elements; sterilizing the sensor array and the protector as discrete elements; and mechanically fixing the position of the curved contoured surface of the protector relative to the articulating surface of one of the trials with the sensor array between the curved contoured surface of the protector and the articulating surface of the trial.

24. (withdrawn) The method of claim 23 wherein the act of mechanically fixing the position of the curved contoured surface of the protector to the articulating surface of one of the trials comprises fitting complementary structures together.

25. (withdrawn) The method of claim 23 wherein the complementary structures comprise a stud and an aperture.

26. (withdrawn) The method of claim 23 wherein the protector and sensor array are held together as an assembly by a mechanical connection.

27. (withdrawn) The method of claim 18 wherein the protector has first and second portions joined along an axis, the method further comprising bonding the first portion of the protector to the trial before sterilizing the protector while leaving the second portion capable

of pivotal movement about the axis, and wherein the act of mechanically fixing at least a portion of the protector to one of the trials comprises inserting the sensor array between the first and second portions of the protector and then securing the second portion of the protector to the trial with the second portion extending over at least a substantial part of the sensor array.